

Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman

Commissioner Michael J. Copps

Commissioner Robert M. McDowell

Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker

Federal Communications Commission

445 Twelfth Street SW

Washington, DC 20554

Re: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn, and Baker,

As an employee of Sorenson Communications, I am deeply concerned with the proposed low rates for reimbursement to the VRS industry. If such a rate is approved, jobs will be lost, a functionally equivalent service mandated by the ADA will fold, and the progression we have made as a society to advance technology and services for disabled individuals will catapult back into archaic times.

Sorenson Communications employs thousands of employees and a vast amount of those employees are deaf. It has been communicated to us that if we adopt the low rate that the FCC has brought forward, our company will end up in bankruptcy meaning the job I currently possess and the jobs of thousands of other employees will come to an end. It concerns me that a governing body that is currently dealing with an unstable economy, where unemployment is at a peak, would jeopardize any chance of stability by knowingly flooding the economy with even more unemployed individuals.

VRS and the improvements made to it over the years have moved us closer to the goal of "function equivalence" mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act. As a leader in the industry, Sorenson has been able to be ahead of the times in offering services like 911 to their consumers even before it was mandated by the FCC. Cutting our rate would mean we would now fall behind. The FCC rate proposal would destroy that progress and move us further from achieving the goals of the ADA.

One of the reason I value my employment with Sorenson is that they have taken pride in my work and my success as an interpreter. When I first started out as a Video Interpreter 3 years ago, my skills were adequate. Now, thanks to Sorenson, I have achieved certification and have the confidence to handle all

VRS calls in an ethical, professional manner. Sorenson constantly strives to improve the skills of the interpreters in order to better meet the needs and demands of the VRS consumers. With the proposed rate cut, the professional development opportunities that I have been able to utilize to further enhance my tactile skills and professionalism, specifically ethical decision making, would be in jeopardy and hence hinder my continued success as well as others of being a skilled, qualified professional interpreter in the VRS industry. This is a trait that the deaf consumers appreciate and expect when using our service.

Visualize your world with no residential phone, cell phone, or media to help you communicate with the world. You now have to rely on face to face communication for all of your daily activities. This is what your proposed rate will do to the deaf community.

I implore that you take all factors of the VRS industry into consideration when proposing a new rate. To cut back in an industry that has made leaps and bounds to bridging the gap between hearing and deaf people throughout the world, that has made huge strides to functional equivalency for our deaf population, would throw us back into an era where deaf individuals were pushed aside and their rights ignored. It would force deaf individuals to live pre-historically in a high speed media driven world.

Sincerely,

Donna Lauinger